



OSTA

Ottawa Student
Transportation
Authority

TO: OCDSB Elementary School Principals, VP and Office Administrators

FROM: Vicky Kyriaco, General Manager/CAO

DATE: June 3, 2016

RE: **Transportation Services for 2016-2017 School Year**

As the end of another school year rapidly approaches, please note of the following information regarding transportation services for the 2016-2017 school year. We encourage you to include any of this information in newsletters or correspondence to your school community. Feel free to share OSTA's website address: www.ottawaschoolbus.ca.

2016-17 Student Transportation Information:

Route information will be available to parents as of **August 19, 2016** via the online Parent Portal. Schools may have access to some routes prior to this date, through the school web portal <https://ostabusplanner.ottawaschoolbus.ca/> or via OSTA's website link to the Parent Portal Log In.

Student Transportation Information can also be found using the "**Stop Finder**" located on the main page of our website, which will link to the "**BusPlanner - Parent Portal**". The parent must enter the student's last name, birthdate, school and grade in order to access route and stop information.

The "**Stop Finder**" feature returns bus stop and route information for eligible students who are assigned to regular yellow school bus or small school purpose vehicle service, or for eligible grade 7 and 8 students who are assigned to OC Transpo Service.

OC Transpo route schedules will also be made available through the OSTA website or can be found directly through the OC Transpo website at www.octranspo.com. More information on routes to specific schools can be obtained on OC Transpo's Quick Planner under High Schools and Middle Schools.

Small School Purpose Vehicles

The driver responsible for the route will contact each family directly prior to the first day of school.

Students with Special Needs – Requests for Accessible Transportation

Each student requiring special accommodation for transportation should have a "*Request for Accessible Transportation*" form completed by their parents, signed by the Principal and forwarded to the Spec Ed department. The Spec Ed department will then send the form to OSTA with any appropriate comments that would help us meet the student's individual needs.

Any requests for short- or long-term accommodation for medical conditions also require the "*Request for Accessible Transportation Form*" signed by the parents and the principal, and then forwarded to the Superintendent for approval. A medical note or certificate indicating what needs are being accommodated is required. Please note that accommodation of needs for transportation should also be

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reflected at the school. For example, if a student cannot walk x number of meters to school, then should the student be running around in gym, at recess, or during extra-curricular activities?

Transportation for students in a joint custody arrangement and having two homes

OSTA has developed a new policy & procedure to deliver transportation services to students in a joint custody arrangement and having two homes. An application process and other requirements need to be met for parents to receive this service, and the homes or daycares in question must meet all other eligibility requirements. The deadline for September start up transportation was June 1. **Renewals** of current schedule calendars are due **June 30**. All other applications will be reviewed after September 15, and prior to October 1.

More information can be found on our website: <http://www.ottawaschoolbus.ca/policies-procedures/variable-transportation-for-students-in-a-joint-custody-arrangement-and-having-two-homes-copy/>

Kindergarten Staggered Entry and ID

School bus routes are planned according to the number of registered students in the data system from May to July 2016. We continue to make changes in transportation throughout school start up. Routes are driven as planned as of the first day of school September 2016 and drivers will stop at each stop, regardless of whether KG students are beginning that day or whether they are beginning later on in the week.

Please remind parents of new and returning KG students that they **MUST** meet the students at their stop in the afternoon. Failure to do so could result in termination of transportation services and/or their child being dropped off at the nearest police station.

OSTA will be providing bright yellow plastic tags that should be attached to any KG student's back pack (preferably on the lower left side). These will assist the drivers in making sure a responsible person designated by the parent, or the parent, is at the stop to collect the student at their drop off point, per policy. We kindly request that teachers remove the plastic tags from any students NOT in kindergarten.

School Bus Safety Awareness Day (First Time Rider Program)

This year's School Bus Safety Awareness Day is scheduled for **Sunday, August 28, 2016** and will run at six sites across the city in 45 minute sessions from 09:00am to 1:00pm. This important safety program is geared primarily for parents and children new to school bus transportation and for all elementary school-aged children who ride a school bus. Families and students can register to attend at one of the following sites:

School	Address	Contact for Registration
Holy Trinity H.S.	180 Katimavik Rd., Kanata	613-836-0502
**École élémentaire catholique Saint-Joseph d'Orléans	6664 rue Carrière, Orléans	613-488-2237
Sir Wilfrid Laurier S.S.	1515 Tenth Line, Orléans	613-835-2488
St. Mark H.S.	1040 Dozois Rd., Ottawa	613-721-5500
** École élémentaire publique Charlotte Lemieux	2093 prom. Belair, Ottawa	613-721-5500
Woodroffe H.S.	2410 Georgina Dr., Ottawa	613-821-1414

** French presentation sites

Parents/Guardians can find more information on School Bus Safety Awareness Day on our website at www.ottawaschoolbus.ca/helpful-resources/school-bus-safety-awareness-day/. A flyer is attached for your convenience.

Applications for Seat Availability

Students who had been approved to access service under the Seat Availability provision for 2015/16 will need to re-apply for service for the next school year. The **NEW** “**Application for Access to Empty Seats on School Bus Vehicles**” form is available on the OSTA website at <http://www.ottawaschoolbus.ca/policies-procedures/empty-seat-seat-availability-provision-copy/>.

It remains the responsibility of the school principal to administer the empty seat provision at her/his school. School principals are authorized to assign empty seats to students not eligible for busing on school bus vehicles serving their schools after October 1. Please note that the number of available seats will be decreasing year over year as OSTA continues to optimize routes for more efficient and effective transportation service.

Transportation Information During the Summer Months

Please note that the Ottawa Student Transportation Authority will be open during the summer months from 8:00am to 4:30pm, Monday to Friday. OCDSB parents should contact OSTA directly during the summer months if they have questions about transportation or changes to their children’s address or caregiver information.

Transportation Information During the Fall

Parents should be advising schools directly of any changes to student home or caregiver address. Please remind parents that OSTA will require a minimum of three business days to implement a change to transportation services, longer for transportation to two homes in a joint custody situation. During the month of September, we ask for your assistance in advising parents of new transportation information, due to the volume of changes processed through OSTA at the busy start-up period. You may also direct them to the online Parent Portal ostabusplanner.ottawaschoolbus.ca.

Students with Life-Threatening Medical Conditions

Please be reminded that three copies of the “**Life-threatening Medical Condition Emergency Transportation**” forms must be submitted to OSTA by **September 30** of each year for all students who may require the emergency administration of epinephrine auto-injectors or other emergency medical attention during transportation to or from school. These forms will be processed and sent to the school bus operators. Forms are not to be given directly to the driver or transportation provider by parents and/or guardians or school staff. It is crucial these forms are sent in at a timely manner to ensure appropriate response to emergency situations.

OC Transpo Presto Passes – Grades 7 and 8

Presto passes for students in grades 7 and 8 will continue to be managed by OSTA and should NOT be registered. OSTA’s updated Public Transit T7 policy and procedure are available online. Presto School Board Passes will be delivered to schools the second week of August.

Please encourage students to TAP their cards on the bus, whether they board at the front or via the rear doors on any bus, every time. This helps OC Transpo and OSTA assess the number of riders and the number of buses we need to manage loads on particular routes. More buses means fewer overloads and less waiting for another bus for our students.

School Active Transportation Program

OSTA offers a variety of services to schools to assist and support students who walk or wheel to school. Parents and students can check out our "[Preferred Route to School](#)" maps online to determine which route best suits their needs. If your school is interested in School Travel Planning, or you are experiencing difficulties managing vehicle and pedestrian traffic around your school site, please contact OSTA's Safety and Accessible Transportation Coordinator, Rob Masterson, rob.masterson@ottawaschoolbus.ca.

I trust this information will be of assistance to you as you wrap up your school year. Thank you, in advance, for sharing this information with your school staff and school community. Should you require any clarification on any item, please contact Blyth Helman, Assistant General Manager blyth.helman@ottawaschoolbus.ca or email me at Vicky.kyriaco@ottawaschoolbus.ca.

Have a great summer!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Vicky Kyriaco', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Vicky Kyriaco
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